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NSC BRIEFING

10 December 1953

BACKGROUND  
ZHUKOV'S RELATIONSHIP WITH  
PARTY PRESIDIUM MEMBERS

As the climax to the Revolutionary Anniversary celebration in Moscow on 7 November, Foreign Minister and Party Presidium member V. M. Molotov gave a dinner for the foreign diplomatic corps. Ambassador Bohlen was invited to share a table with members of the Party Presidium (G. M. Malenkov and N. S. Khrushchev were not present) and the British and French Ambassadors. During the course of the dinner, after Marshal Bulganin,

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[REDACTED] had left because of a rapidly developing state of intoxication, Bohlen had an opportunity to observe Marshal Zhukov's behavior in relation to the topmost level of Soviet leaders. *(B)*

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There were two elements in this relationship which stood out clearly to Ambassador Bohlen. It appeared that Zhukov "found little amusing or edifying" in the performance of those Soviet leaders present and it was quite obvious that he was not on imtimate terms with them. He also displayed a certain degree of independence. This was illustrated when Zhukov, asked by Molotov to propose a toast, declared that he wished to second the American Ambassador's toast to justice. In evident annoyance, A. I. Mikoyan leaned over toward him and hissed, "Can't you think up a toast of your own?" Zhukov, however, stubbornly refused to withdraw his seconding of Bohlen's toast or to advance one of his own.

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